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LIFE AND WRITINGS OF HÖLTY.

In the following brief account of the life of Hölty, we have followed and abridged the narrative prefixed to his works by his friend Voss.

Lewis Henr. Christ. Hölty was born on the 21st of December, 1748, at Mariensee, in the Electorate of Hanover, where his father, Philip Ernst Hölty, was a preacher of the gospel. His mother's name was Elizabeth Juliana Gössel, whom his father had married after the early death of his first wife. She died in 1757, and his father was soon after married to a third wife, who became a widow in 1775.

Hölty is said to have possessed a wonderful degree of personal beauty, until in his ninth year he suffered severely from an attack of the small pox. In his early youth he manifested an extraordinary vivacity and eagerness in the pursuit of knowledge, and was in the constant habit of committing to writing whatever occurred to him as worthy of being remembered. His pleasant and engaging manners and amiable disposition, the beauty of his person, and the good nature and humor displayed in his conversation, gained for him the affection and good will of all who knew him.

About the time of his mother's death, he was attacked so violently by the small pox, that for some time the preservation of his sight was despaired of, and the natural beauty of

his countenance was quite destroyed. But when, at the end of two years, he was again enabled to use his eyes, his eagerness and industry in the pursuit of learning was redoubled. His father, who was extensively skilled in literature and science, taught him the Latin, French, Greek, and Hebrew languages, geography, history, and the other branches that are taught in the schools. At this period his industry was so great, that he scarcely allowed himself to eat his food in quiet, and the greater part of the night was spent in intense application to his studies. His parents, aware of the danger of this unseasonable labor, did all they could to prevent it, but the imprudent enthusiasm of his genius frustrated their efforts. After the family had retired for the night, and the lights were extinguished, he contrived to form a light with materials that he had provided himself with during the day. Notwithstanding the late hours he kept, he was a very early riser. That he might never spend the morning in sleep, he contrived an expedient by which he was sure to wake himself at a very early hour. Yet he was not morose, or haughty, or a secluded bookworm. The pleasingness of his manners, the serenity of his temperament, and the kindness of his disposition made him the joy of his family before he became their pride. The delights of domestic and social life, the quiet of rural retirement, and a lively feeling of the charms of nature secured him effectually against the torpor of secluded study. His soul was the abode of every pure and noble feeling, and was adorned with powers of no ordinary cast, which were nourished and developed and strengthened by a diligent study of the great masters in the world of letters.

His passion for solitary meditation manifested itself at a very early age. He loved to wander among the trees of the forest, and read aloud his favorite authors, or to yield himself up to the emotions which filled his soul while contemplating the beauties of nature. The grave-yard, in the solemn hours of night, was the scene of his meditations. In these youthful propensities it is not difficult to discover the poetic temperament. The mind endued with the creative talent which is essential to the poet, always delights to follow out the trains of its own thoughts and images undisturbed by the noise of business and the interruptions of society. The

deep shadows of the grove, the wild scenery of the mountain, the beauties of cultivated landscapes, the majesty of the river, winding its course along towards the ocean, the opening charms of spring, the glory and splendor of the dawning day, the gorgeous drapery of a sunset sky; evening that comes like a holy resting hour, after a day of toil, and struggle, and fatigue; the blue canopy of heaven with its thousand star lights; midnight, when all is hushed in a deep and solemn repose, and the mind is suffered to wander away with nothing to restrain it, are well adapted to enkindle the "heavenly fire," and to fill the imagination with crowds of "thick coming fancies," that charm away the enthusiastic poet of nature from the haunts of society, and make him forget for a time that he has aught to do with anything other than the thoughts, feelings, and images that are gathering and moving and glowing in that bright world, which his own mind has opened before him.

Like many other eminent men and distinguished poets, Hölty showed his prevalent taste for poetry in some of his most youthful productions. It is said of him that while at church his fancy would frequently strike out verses and stanzas which he would write down upon the wall if he could find nothing else. These early effusions of precocious talent, are, however, rarely to be depended upon as authentic, and even if they are so, they are never thought worth preserving until their author has attained the full measure of intellectual growth. Perhaps, too, there is no one so stupid that he has not attempted things in "prose or verse," that were the wonder of friends and parents, and would have been the wonder of the world, had he afterwards done anything to gain himself a name. We cannot, therefore, consider Hölty's elegy upon a favorite dog, and his other infantile effusions worth much notice; nor do we think they display to any remarkable extent the powers of mind which were afterwards developed and so delightfully employed.

The anxiety of our poet to cultivate his mind and store it with useful knowledge was so great, that, like many other industrious students, he fell into the fault of neglecting his personal appearance, a fault for which he was often reproved by his acquaintances and friends, and which he as often promised to correct.

Hölty's acquirements at the age of sixteen were sufficient to enable him to prosecute with advantage the study of a learned profession at a university. But his father being fully persuaded of the importance of a most intimate acquaintance with the ancient classics, and of giving his son an opportunity of acquiring a greater knowledge of the world, and more polish of manners, sent him to the public school in Celle, which was then the residence of Gössel. At this place he remained three years, and gained the affection and respect of his teachers and all who knew him. He then returned to his father, and in the following year (1769), took up his abode at Göttingen in order to study Theology. His father appointed him the usual term of three years to qualify himself for the duties of his profession. He never for a moment forgot his destination, but devoted himself earnestly to those studies which would be useful to him as a preacher. Without neglecting his professional studies, he found much time to devote to the study of the best ancient and modern writers, and to the composition of his works.

During the third year of his course at Göttingen, he became acquainted with several young men who afterwards rose to eminence in the republic of letters, among whom were Voss and Count Stollberg. He now found his situation so agreeable and so favorable to the cultivation of letters, that he became desirous of prolonging his stay, and accordingly obtained his father's permission to remain there six months longer. But as his funds were extremely low, he succeeded in obtaining a stipend which was to be bestowed upon the worthiest candidate, and a place in the philological seminary. His father, upon being informed of these circumstances, was contented that he should remain.

The appearance of Hölty by no means accorded with the remarkable character of his mind. The paleness of his countenance, the simplicity of his manners, his whole mien and conduct were such as to impress all who were unacquainted with him with a very wrong idea of his character. It was only in his clear blue eyes, when he was animated by conversation or interested in reading aloud some fine passage from a favorite author, that the true and heartfelt expression of his soul beamed forth. Although he was never very forward to impart his sentiments and emotions to others, yet he

was by no means a stern, reserved, and unyielding character. He had a high relish for all innocent amusements, and his wit and spirit were always sought for. Voss, the writer of his life, says, that he never knew him to shed tears but twice, one of which times was on the occasion of his father's death. When in the presence of strangers he rarely spoke, and even among his friends, when a large number of them were together, he seldom joined in the conversation, unless it was particularly interesting or directed mainly to himself. At such times his manner of speaking was lively, his voice was raised, and his countenance suffused with color.

Although Hölty was in many respects remarkable for his carelessness and indifference, yet he possessed a great share of curiosity. Every thing that was new, he was sure to know first. He was always the first to examine the books that were for sale at the mart; the opinions that were pronounced upon his own or others' works he was immediately acquainted with. He often sat through the whole day and sometimes through the greater part of the night, forgetting himself and the whole world, over folios and quartos with a patience so untiring, that he accomplished a perusal of them in the course of a few weeks. Whatever he met with in his reading that struck him as beautiful, he was in the habit of transcribing. After his death there were found among his papers translations from Tasso, Ariosto, and some of the minor Greek poets, but they never have been printed. In the last years of his life he acquired the Spanish language, and thus had a wide field opened before him for the gratification of his love of letters.

His devotion to literary pursuits rather strengthened than diminished his fondness for social intercourse with his friends. This is always one of the happiest effects of literature upon the temper and manners of those who cultivate it. Men whose minds are stored with the generous sentiments, beautiful images, and thrilling expressions, which an acquaintance with the poets, and orators, and philosophers, and writers of fiction, in ancient and modern times opens to them, cannot, without some powerfully counteracting cause, or some original and inherent perverseness of disposition, admit any other than noble and highminded views in their intercourse with others. The little jealousies and vexations that inter-

rupt the peace of life, rarely come in to disturb the harmony that exists among those who have been united in the studies of youth by a similarity of taste, and a desire to adorn and improve their minds by similar means. Every student must feel the truth of this remark. Hölty and his literary friends were a pleasing example. When they met together under the auspices of the venerable Georgia Augusta, their love of letters and their enthusiasm for poetry produced an intimacy which lasted for life. The free and unrestrained interchange of opinions and emotions and sentiments, bound them together in a union of soul as pure and lasting as it was delightful and honorable to human nature. Hölty was always eager to promote the improvement and happiness of those friends whom he valued so much. No effort was too much for his untiring assiduity in their service. His own interests were always postponed whenever by so doing *their* happiness might be promoted. His acquirements enabled him to aid them frequently in their pursuits. It is said that Miller was instructed by him in English, Hahn in Greek, and Voss in English and Italian.

In 1773 he began to instruct others and to translate from the English for his support. It appears by a letter which he wrote in the following year, that his labors in this way were but poorly compensated. Although he devoted five hours every day to teaching, his pay was so little to be depended upon, that he was compelled to have recourse again to his father's aid to support himself. Among his translations out of the English literature, the Dialogues of Hurd and a part of Shaftesbury's works are particularly mentioned.

In 1774 he accompanied Miller to Leipzig, and in the autumn of the same year was attacked by the dangerous symptom of raising blood; a symptom which first troubled him at the commencement of his academic life. At the beginning of May following, he returned to Mariensee by way of Hanover, that he might have an opportunity of consulting the celebrated Zimmermann. In the autumn of the same year he went again to Hanover, but the disease had made too fatal a progress to be checked by any human aid, however skilfully it might be applied. While his strength was daily wasting away and an untimely grave was opening be-

fore him, his composure never deserted him. His letters to his friends during this interesting but awful portion of his life, show the kind affections of his heart and his firmness of mind in a pleasing and instructive point of view. He lingered until the month of September, 1776, when he died lamented by all who knew him; and his early death cannot but be regretted even by those who were not bound to him by the ties of kindred and country; for the works which he had already written gave rich promise of better things, which would doubtless have been fulfilled, had he been permitted to develope his powers still farther by the studies and labors of a longer life.

The works of Hölty were published by some of his friends after his death. Those which we have are probably but a small part of what he wrote. They exhibit his character in every line. A prevailing taste for the beauties of rural scenery is displayed throughout all of his poems. In reading his works, we feel convinced that what we read is a true and vivid description of emotions that spring from the heart. We are not sickened at every turn by an affectation of sentiment that is too often found in the writings of those who invoke the rural muse. He possessed a heart that could feel, an imagination that could combine, and a pencil that could delineate the varied charms which the works of creation display to the poetic eye. The simplicity of his style, the propriety of his images, the *naturalness* of his sentiments will forever win him admirers among those who are capable of being pleased by the chaste effusions of a pure and delicate mind. We cannot claim for him a place by the side of Göthe, Schiller, and Wieland, for his genius was not fully developed by frequent and long continued efforts. But the display of the best feelings of the human heart, and the pleasing exhibition of an enthusiasm amiable, poetic, and winning, will, until the nature of man is changed, gain the favor of all who are possessed of refined and elevated souls, and improved and cultivated tastes.

C. C.

IMAGINATION AS AFFECTING THE ABSTRUSE STUDIES.

Various charges have been brought against imagination on account of the false conclusions which men have arrived at by obeying its dictates. Nothing is easier than forming an hypothesis; we observe a few facts, and connecting them together in our mind, endeavor to satisfy ourselves as to the manner in which some of the wonderful phenomena of nature came to exhibit their present appearance; and in this way we find it exceedingly easy to account for almost all the wonders which attract our attention. Were there only one theory formed to explain each phenomenon that we observe, or if there were only one plausible theory, we might be less disposed to doubt its truth. But we see a great number invented, and appearing equally plausible, to account for the same fact. How many theories (yet entirely different) have been formed in the science of geology, and each appearing so well established by what we observe in examining the surface of the earth, that we should be willing to believe any single one, were it not for the great number which are started at the same time with equal plausibility. But when we know that certainly only one of these theories can be true, and when, also, many are directly proved to be false, it is not strange that imagination, the builder of all, should have been represented as a mischievous faculty, which ought not to be listened to. It has indeed done much injury. The errors of the Platonists, which led the world astray for so many centuries, and the errors in all branches of science, were perhaps owing to the suggestions of imagination. The effects of this faculty are strikingly apparent in the worship of the heathen nations in all ages. The Pantheon of the Romans, and all the deities whose images were contained therein, were the monuments of the power of imagination. And in later days, the Eastern nations, as they fall down in adoration before the most horrible monsters carved in wood or stone, worship, not the beings who created and preside over the world, but acknowledge, on their knees, the power which the imagination of some more gifted mortal has possessed, to shackle the understanding and debase the heart.

But although it has produced many bad consequences, imagination has also been of great use. It appears to us that too much censure has been passed upon it; and that, although it may be dangerous when indulged in to excess, it still is one of the most noble powers which we possess, and is a great assistance in the most difficult studies which we can pursue. The causes which have brought it into disrepute appear to be these: In the first place, a strong imagination is necessary in the writer of fiction. Unless the author possesses this power, the novel and the poem are insipid and tedious. Imagination is the soul of poetry, and how then (it is asked) can it be a useful faculty in the dry study of Mathematics, which is perhaps a perfect contrast to the flights of the poet? The imagination transports us to other worlds of our own making, where the common occurrences of life are forgotten, where it is our chief happiness to unbend the mind and give ourselves up to the pleasures, not of thought, but of reverie. And can the imagination, which suggests all this, be any thing but an incumbrance when we apply ourselves to the severer studies? And how, too, can it be of any use where reason must operate, when in a great many instances its direct tendency is to destroy reason? Is the gloomy hypochondriac who, affected by a strong imagination, fancies he is made of glass, and dares not move lest he should break in pieces, is he a fit person to engage in the solution of a mathematical problem, or can he form a correct judgment of the character and actions of men?

These and similar questions are triumphantly asked by those who would destroy the powers of imagination, and it seems that in this way men have reasoned themselves into the belief that imagination is a mere child's toy, which is to be thrown away as soon as we turn our mind to any serious subject.

Now to assert that imagination cannot be of any use in the abstruse studies, because it is essential in the writer of fiction, is as absurd as to say, that judgment in the common affairs of life, or in difficult questions, is not to be relied upon, because it is used in discussing the merits of a novel or a poem. And the consideration that it weakens the understanding, and produces derangement when indulged to

excess, is no more a reason for endeavouring to stifle all its workings, than the fact, that fire will burn us if we fall into it, is a reason why we should attempt or wish to quench every fire in the world. In considering the difference of character between men of a lively imagination and those who are not thus gifted, we find that nearly all those, whose names are mentioned in history with peculiar respect, were men who possessed this power of the mind in a considerable degree. Almost all the great philosophers of ancient days evinced by their remarks and their theories a lively imagination. The idea of Archimedes, that if he had but a place to stand upon, he would move the world, is an instance of this; and it would seem that in his time, the wildest imagination could hardly have conceived of such a thing. And in all the discoveries which have been made from the earliest ages to the present day, the aid of imagination is apparent. On the other hand, where is there a remarkably stupid person who is not deficient in this power? It seems indeed, that the want of originality is owing to the want of imagination. If, then, this is a faculty which it were better for us if we did not possess, we must infer that those great men laboured under a mental disadvantage, which persons less gifted with powers of mind are free from, and that in order to become great, men are obliged to struggle continually against it. I shall endeavor to answer this by showing how their imagination comes in to aid them in their studies.

It is of great use in mathematical investigation. The rules are indeed laid down, and it is easy to follow them, but the great difficulty in solving problems is to determine what rules to adopt. We have a riddle to read, which we may easily unfold after we have obtained the clue; but the difficulty occurs at first, how to get this clue; and here the benefit of imagination is felt, here its most powerful efforts are made. Nor is the mathematician contented with merely solving his problem; he wishes to find some easier and more beautiful way of coming to the result, and his imagination is again taxed. In Natural Philosophy, too, what a field is open for the operation of imagination! The discoveries which a man can make in the natural world, depend very much upon the degree in which he possesses this power; and we have seen the effects of it, and its uses from the

earliest ages. If this power had not continually acted as a stimulus upon the Alchymists of old, and prevented their being discouraged in their labours, we should now perhaps be destitute of many valuable substances which they discovered while in search of the philosopher's stone, or the elixir vitæ. And now that chemists have given up the pursuit of a shadow, how would it have been possible to perform any of the rational and useful experiments in their science, if these philosophers had been destitute of imagination?

Nor is it of less advantage in moral reasoning; we speak of the ingenuity with which a false opinion is defended, and without imagination no one can possess ingenuity; but because we are obliged to employ ingenious arguments to defend a false opinion, is it any reason why we should not have the same advantage in proving the truth of what we know to be true? Imagination may lead us into false conclusions, but on the other hand it may be as likely to lead us to the truth. The person who believes the soul must die because the body dies, exerts no stronger imagination than he who brings up arguments from the course of nature to prove the immortality of the soul.

Thus it appears that imagination is an assistance to us even in the most difficult studies; and its good effects upon us in other ways are too numerous to be mentioned here; I will notice only one great benefit which we derive from it. Imagination is essential to hope, the last good that remained after the long train of evils which flew out from Pandora's box. Why then should we quarrel with one of the best gifts ever presented to man? which cheers the present, by opening to us a future fashioned after our own wishes, which though it may never be realized, renders us far happier than we should be, if the real future were disclosed to us.

S.

PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS.

Periodical Publications have assumed an importance among the literature of the day, that deserves and meets with the highest respect. As periodical writing has long been and is now growing more and more popular, newspapers and critical journals have accordingly continually increased in number and respectability. The soundest learning and best talents in the community have been called forth, and their labours have been appreciated and rewarded by the public. This is convincing proof of the enlightened state of society; ignorance alone is self-satisfied and self-sufficient; knowledge is anxiously sensible of its own deficiencies, and longs for the spreading and brightening of its intellectual light.

Newspapers furnish the principal food of the minds of the common people. This is shown by the constant conversations carried on respecting the contents of their columns, politics, accidents, and news in general; by the impatience felt and manifested when waiting for a sight of them, and by their vast circulation. One great cause of their popularity is that, as their general name promises, they gratify the universal passion for novelty. Happiness cannot be enjoyed in unvaried sameness of pleasure, and distinction, though under some shape or other the desire of all, disgusts when it is only a dull uniformity of honour. The cheapness of the public journals makes them universally accessible; and, thanks to our common schools, all who can get them, can read them. Their wide diffusion, and the avidity with which they are read, render them powerful means of distributing information, and important intelligence spreads over the country almost at once.

We have spoken of newspapers as supplying a great part of the intellectual food of the common orders in society, but their benefits are confined to no class. All subjects are discussed, and all orders of people interested. The merchant learns at a glance the state of distant markets. The wants of a people are hardly felt before they are known far and near; and self interest, acting the part kindly but mys-

teriously assigned to it by the divine architect of the mind, hastens to relieve them, though thinking only of gratifying itself. The price current guides the exuberant harvests of one quarter of the globe to the dearth and scarcity of another. Needless and injurious fluctuations, we know, may take place in the markets, springing from unfounded newspaper reports of prices, and jobbers may fatten on the credulity of fairer men. This is an evil, but one not to be named in comparison with the benefits of newspapers in the great commercial purposes they answer. A slight flaw, to be sure, is no less important for being in a diamond, but still the diamond is invaluable. Let us bring the spirit of being fully as great admirers and lovers of what is deserving, as despisers of what is worthless, to the consideration of another feature of general newspaper character, of perhaps more questionable merit—the devotion of their columns to political discussion. The fierce spirit of party is now hushed: and we look back with astonishment on the uproar and fiery fury into which it threw the country but a few years ago. Both of the great parties were undoubtedly warm patriots, yet each accused the other bitterly and seriously of betraying their country. This epidemical madness may with some appearance of truth be said to have been spread by means of the public papers. The real origin of the dissension was something far different. Europe, with which alone of the distant parts of the globe we, as a nation, were much connected, and to which we naturally looked as a home, Europe, soon after the establishment of our federal government, was every where up in arms. Nations dividing against each other and against themselves, the sympathies of our countrymen were strongly excited, some in favour of one and some in favour of the other great party, even before their own interests were much affected. The struggle in Europe lasted long, and our dissensions, founded principally on a partiality for one or the other of the parties, grew more and more violent. At last our interests became involved by the obstruction and spoliation of our commerce by both the belligerents. Vengeance and redress were thoughts now uppermost through the country, and the division before existing widened at once into complete separation on the question, which of the two aggressors must be

attacked, and, consequently, which supported. The public papers disseminated all that transpired in the affairs of Europe and in our complicated relations with its different states. This was their business, and this was certainly for the interest of the country; but parties were thrown by it into a fever of excitement. Misrepresentation undoubtedly abounded, and inflammatory essays on these affairs, as well as on some domestic questions, such as the interference of national and state rights, &c.; all these heated the blood and quickened the pulse. Thus the fountains of that great deep, the public mind, were broken up. That the newspapers of the day were deeply influential in producing this state of things, cannot be questioned, any more than that they did a great deal of evil in designedly inflaming party feeling, when they might have avoided it and at the same time given all possible information. But what was the choice, supposing a choice possible? Utter ignorance, in the great body of the people, of foreign affairs, without papers or full information, the means of diffusing it being sometimes perverted with them. This, if any, would have been the alternative. But this is not all that is to be considered in estimating the advantages of public political discussion. There were the essays of Adams, paving the way to the revolution; of Paine, as valuable to the cause as armies; there is now the thorough sifting of the characters of candidates for office, and the wide circulation of political knowledge so vitally essential to a republic. The stoppage of this circulation would bring disorder into the body politic, as that of the blood would into the human body. Anarchy first, and then despotism would follow. What then are the evils, compared with the benefits of such discussions?

We have considered public journals as vehicles of information upon politics and commerce, as being the two principal purposes they answer. They communicate, besides, a kind of miscellaneous general knowledge of great local importance, gathering the small news of the day, affording opportunity for the suggestion of public improvements and examination of their merits, and of other questions interesting to the immediate vicinity. They are the receivers and exhibiters of those events, those matters of every-day interest to a community, which are more thought of and acted upon by

the little world they belong to, than the great concerns of foreign nations or even of their own, or those events and deeds in past times that serve for the corner stones of Chronology and History. They are indeed of transitory moment, and are doomed like human actions, pursuits, and feelings generally, and all that makes up human life, to be quickly swallowed up in time, and eternally forgotten; while they are present to us they are every thing to us, like the objects in the material world about us, that lessen as we leave them, and are soon to us as though they were not.

The labours of reviewers and editors of monthly and quarterly journals are chiefly for literary men. They levy contributions on the occasional literature of the day for the purpose of criticism, and make the publications that comprise it, as well as scientific subjects, foundations for essays of their own. It is plainly impossible for the generality of people, even of educated men, to have a thorough knowledge of all subjects; yet it will not do to be entirely ignorant of them. And in this appears to lie one great advantage of diffusing information by periodicals—that they give a general idea of a subject in short space, in contradistinction from the old plan of teaching a great deal or nothing, at least nothing worth learning, forcing upon a man voluminous details of general views and minute particulars, or allowing him no information on the topic at all. Many a one has mustered the forces of his courage and energy for the siege of an important post in the territories of science, and fallen back in dismay on finding it covered by columns of ten or a dozen octavos deep. Supposing a critical journal ably conducted, as it must be in order to be supported, we find comprehensive views of the subjects treated by the authors reviewed, and the most valuable particulars strikingly presented. Now such information is inestimable to a man who cannot spend time in reading and reflecting upon the original work, and many a one who can and does, will on perusing the review learn much that he did not before appreciate, and will find his horizon extended upon a subject by a mind that can look easily through the whole, and give a short and connected outline. Nay, it is not unfrequently that we see fuller and abler expositions of the first principles of a science and more profound investigations in the review than in

the work that gave rise to it, and this too in a few pages. A sound and energetic review of an important publication is like the converging lens, condensing the golden rays to a bright and burning focus, or the camera obscura, reducing a rich landscape to miniature yet proportionate dimensions.

One great benefit of critical journals is yet unnoticed. They save us the expense of buying and the time and trouble of reading productions unworthy of either. And not only are we informed of what is worthless, but also of what is preeminently good. There may be instances of wrong judgment and even of wilful unfairness, but they are not frequent; and if one journal is wrong, another will be prompt enough in setting it right. And generally, from the character given by reviewers, we can judge well enough what literature best deserves our attention. Let us not be considered as relying too implicitly on the infallibility of the criticism in question, but as being fully of opinion that it has generally been a true test of the excellence of the literature and science for a long time past presented to the public, and has been so esteemed. Does an eminent review designate a novel, a work on natural philosophy or politics, or on any subject, as of the highest rank in the order to which it belongs; the decision, every one knows, exercises a powerful influence on the reading community. Such information is, we contend, of the highest practical moment. Amidst the vast multiplicity of books continually pouring upon the world, some directory, pointing out the best, is indispensable. People could not of themselves find it out soon enough for their interest, if they could at all; and it seems evident, that it is best for them to support persons expressly for the purpose of attending to this business, and to have, as indeed they have long had, surveyors of the literary and scientific commodities in the market.

But critical reviewing is not only highly beneficial to the community at large, in diffusing so much information, and in selecting for all the best books for their reading or their study; but is or may be essentially so in the jurisdiction it assumes over writers that have committed themselves to the press. Now, though authors may assert their utter indifference in choosing between the frown and the smile of critics (and let us not be thought by any means wanting in the

same heroic, glorious independence), we truly believe that the judges in the Olympic games held not a more delicate, responsible and authoritative office. It is in their power, and it is their duty, to give celebrity to unpretending merit, and disgrace to arrogant worthlessness. We know that an author's appeal from the sentence of reviewers to the judgment of the people is often successful, and that he has much further to look than the opinions of self-styled critics; but we know, too, that his reception in the literary world, like that of a person visiting foreign countries, depends very much on his letters of introduction and recommendation, and that without credentials from reviewers he will find it a hard and slow task to make himself popular, and establish himself in the good graces of the community.

We have thus imperfectly and disjointedly sketched out some of the prominent benefits and characteristics of periodical publications—a subject certainly of great importance, and worthy of abler investigation. We have only to remark on the circumstance that entitles them Periodical—their coming out at stated times. In newspapers it is of the highest value to us; for, satisfied that every week, at longest, we shall find all the news of the times collected together to our hands, we need not and do not put ourselves to the trouble, often probably the vain trouble, of ascertaining it by personal inquiry. And so too is it with reviewers; do our utmost, and we can hardly keep up with the literature of the age without them; the majority of books printed must necessarily remain entirely unknown to all but a few, who read every thing, and a few more, deeply versed in title pages. Indeed a very respectable stock of general knowledge might be gained from these journals alone. And with respect to men of liberal education, after going through the regular course of academic studies, and becoming thoroughly imbued with the solid sciences, they want a great deal more information of a miscellaneous description—political, commercial, literary, &c. in order to make them even with the world, and familiar with the common topics of conversation in refined society. This information can be best, almost solely, obtained from the periodical publications of the day.

W. H.

THE PRESENTIMENT.

A LEGEND OF THE DEN.

> It is impossible for man to tell
> What things in nature are impossible,
> Or out of nature; or to prove to whom
> Or for what purposes a ghost may come.
>
> *Crabbe.*

Many years ago, there emigrated to this University from the wilds of New-Hampshire, an odd genius, by the name of Jedediah Croak, who took up his abode as a student in the old Den. It is probable that most of his contemporaries are dead, but those who still survive cannot have forgotten this ill-fated being. He was unlike aught mortal both in body and mind. He stood when uncoiled, for his natural appearance was as crooked as a cork-screw, six feet and three inches without his shoes; and was withal so thin, that it was said he never cast a shadow. His head was about the size of a summer squash, and the largest portion of its front surface was occupied by his huge grey eyes, apparently starting from their sockets to overtake and rival his nose, which stood out like the bowsprit of vessel, and seemed an excellent handle whereby to lift and manage the whole body. Jedediah was never known to alter his dress from the day of his arrival to that of his departure. A pepper-and-salt coat and waistcoat, a pair of blue-leg cases, that seemed to be the moulds in which these members were run, and a steeple-crowned hat, comprised his whole wardrobe. The mind and manners of Croak were no less singular than his person. His credulity was extravagant enough to credit the wildest story, and he was a firm believer in witches, ghosts, dreams, presentiments, and the corporeal existence of the devil. This was his first excursion out of sight of his native village; and in the simplicity of his heart he doubted nothing that was told him. It seemed as if nature in forming him contemplated adding a new species to the human family, and sent him forth as a specimen, but as we have never since seen his like, we suppose the experiment was unsuccessful.

Jedediah might have crept about college unnoticed, ex-

cept for his personal appearance, had not a strange action excited the attention of those wights who infest this place, to the great trial and tribulation of all simple-hearted beings like poor Croak. One of these fun-loving students, known by the appellation of Dick Waters, was sitting at his window one summer afternoon, when he espied Jedediah, sweating and puffing, and trudging up the yard, with his shirt thrown over his shoulders like a bag. He quickly saw something ludicrous in this spectacle, and shouting to our hero, he requested to know what were the contents of his metamorphosed shirt. Clams, sir, was the meek and innocent reply of Croak. This was enough for the reckless Dick. Down stairs he leaped, and hastened away to the Den, to get a further explanation of this strange phenomenon. Once possessed of the joke, it was, as such things invariably are, soon spread throughout all the classes.

It seemed that Jedediah had this day made his first visit to Boston, and had fallen in with a load of clams, which were the first that ever met his view, and excited unbounded astonishment. But our hero was of too generous a disposition to enjoy this feast of wonder, this mighty discovery, alone, and instantly began to devise how he might afford his classmates the same gratification he had experienced. He therefore bought a couple of buckets of the queer things. But how to get them to Cambridge was the next question. Jedediah possessed a blue cotton pocket handkerchief, but it never was intended as a clam-bag, for it was hardly a foot square. Poor Croak clapped his hand to his head, and stood eying the clams with a sorrowful countenance, until some bystander observed, that he might put them into his shirt. Instantly the face of Jedediah brightened to smiles of gratitude. 'No doubt of that,' said he, 'can't be any doubt of that at all.' And away he hastened for a few moments, and then returned, with his shirt tied up at the sleeves and bosom. He poured his treasure into it, and throwing it over his shoulder, never paused to rest and hardly to breathe until he emptied them in exultation on the floor of his dark abode.

This adventure immediately brought Jedediah into notice, and gained him many friends, and the particular intimacy of Dick Waters. His room was daily thronged with visiters,

and as soon as his superstitious propensities were known, his head was completely turned, and his belief in supernaturals was wonderfully increased by the awful but well authenticated ghost stories of Dick and his companions. With what death-like countenance, shivering frame, and bristling hair, he listened to them, as they related, how in days of yore his Satanic Majesty rung the college bell at midnight, when some students were 'hooking' chickens—how he carried away one corner of an old building, which could never be repaired—and how there is a certain spot on the common which was once so singed by his step, that it never has borne a blade of grass since. And with what quaking did he hearken to Waters as he told the story of the ghost of a revolutionary soldier which perambulated the entry of Stoughton at midnight on the first of every January.

His reliance on presentiments became every day stronger and stronger: for never did any one enter his mind that Waters did not contrive to have fulfilled by some means or other. He was enabled to accomplish this the more easily, as Jedediah thought him his most sympathetic friend, and made him the confidant of all his terrible secrets, his dreams and forebodings; though it must be confessed that his notions were sometimes almost too extravagant, for the mischievous Dick. Waters began, however, at last, to be almost weary of Croak's friendship, and had determined to get rid of him the first good opportunity.

It was almost twelve, one beautiful moonlight night, towards the middle of December, when Jedediah, after poring over the diagrams of geometry, until he fancied every line a spectre, and every letter the sign of some terrible doom, crawled into bed, not to sleep, but to think over and over again what might be termed his final presentiment, and which he had a few hours before communicated to his friend, who had strengthened it by remarks on his cadaverous looks. Jedediah had this day imagined that the time of his departure from this world of woe was at hand, and he was undergoing all the terror which such an idea is likely to inspire, when on a sudden he heard three tremendous thumps at his door. Poor Croak was almost annihilated by this summons, and clinging to the bed clothes in all the agony of despair, forgot to 'busy' his midnight visiter. Presently the door

opened; a huge being stalked up to the bed, which literally shook with the trembling of its occupant. The figure was dressed in military costume; his face was deadly pale, with the exception of a large purple scar, which crossed his visage obliquely. Jedediah Croak! Jedediah Croak! growled out the spectre in a sepulchral voice—slowly stretching out his right hand, which held an old rusty bayonet—Jedediah Croak, the hour of thy death is at hand; on the first day of January, at 12 o'clock at noon, thou shalt die of an apoplexy. The poor student, at this terrible annunciation, curled himself up into an infinitely small space beneath the bedclothes, nor did he dare look up for nearly an hour, when he mustered sufficient resolution to peep over the coverlid—the spectre had vanished—all was still as death, and the moon's light was reflected into the room. For neither Phœbus nor Diana ever illumined the 'Den' with a smile. Worn out with the occurrences of the day and night, Jedediah fell asleep until the prayer-bell disturbed his dreaming.

Croak took the very first opportunity to acquaint Waters of his terrible visitation. And truly there never was a man more sympathetic with his friend than Dick. Many an hour, with a face which put to shame the everlasting soberness of a shaking quaker, did he condole with the poor wretch on his awful doom. Sometimes with the *kindest* intentions he would strive to laugh away his fears—and at another he would promise all justice to the memory of our luckless wight.

As for the poor victim himself, he crawled about, with the utmost anxiety and tribulation depicted on his countenance. His visage became more and more elongated, and his lank figure became leaner and leaner, until there seemed to be far more danger of his falling to pieces, than of his going off in an apoplexy. His appetite diminished in spite of all the delicacies displayed on the commons' tables.

Time rolled on, until the day came, and found Jedediah awaiting with fear and trembling his awful doom. He finished his last letter to his friends, and entrusted it, together with some directions about his furniture and the disposal of his body, to Dick Waters. He seated himself in his only chair in the middle of his room, and answered only by sighs and groans the consoling speeches of his friend. It was rather a warm day for the winter season, and as the fatal hour drew nigh, group after group of students began to collect in the room, and around the windows and door.

All around was silent—solemnly silent—like the deep stillness of midnight. Presently the clock began to strike—one—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine—ten.—Jedediah's rocking ceased; his blood almost stopt; a cold shiver went over his frame; the spectators drew back—eleven. All was motionless; the lower jaw of the expiring student fell, like the trap-door of a scaffold—twelve!! A deep sepulchral groan rolled out from his distended mouth; the room shook with his convulsion, his chair vanished from under him, and he rolled upon the floor—a dozen students sprang forward, expecting to find him really dead. Jedediah gazed at them for a moment with a fixed look—then coming to himself, and comprehending the whole affair, he leaped up amidst a universal roar, and sprang through the open window.

This was the last that was ever seen of Jedediah Croak. After waiting for a long time, the only information Waters could obtain was, that a person answering the description of Jedediah was seen in the village of Keene, just before a strong wind, but when it had subsided, he had vanished. Dick therefore concluded, that he had been dried up and blown away. On opening the papers left to his care, he found a request that his effects might be bestowed on his friend, the 'Goody,' who had been so attentive to him during his declining hours. Thus ended the history, the adventures, and the life of Jedediah Croak. T. B.

NOTICE OF MADAME DACIER.

From the French of Madame de Genlis.

This illustrious woman, by her learning, her valuable works, and her numerous translations, had an important influence upon the French literature, by disclosing all the literary treasures of antiquity, and inspiring a taste for profound and serious studies. Anne Lefebvre Dacier, daughter of Tanegui Lefebvre, was born at Saumur in 1651. She inherited talents of a superior order from her father, but the happy faculties with which her mind was endowed were discovered by mere accident. Her father was in the habit of giving lessons to his son in the same room where Madamoiselle Lefebvre was employed in working embroidery. She listen-

ed attentively, but in silence, and then prosecuted her studies in solitude. One day, her brother answering incorrectly, she told him in a whisper what he should have said. Her father heard it with equal surprise and joy, and from that time continued to divide his attention equally between his son and daughter. She soon acquired a knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, and learned the Italian as a mere amusement.

André Dacier had likewise attended upon the instruction of M. Lefebvre; and these two pupils, having similar tastes, united in the same pursuit, soon began to cherish kindred sentiments and to feel the ties of tender affection; their marriage was celebrated in 1683, and they then devoted themselves to the same works and the same studies. Boileau always allowed Madame Dacier the pre-eminence above her husband, in all the intellectual productions in which they both were concerned. Her first work was an edition of Callicmachus, enriched with many learned remarks. She was then in the bloom of youth. She had the distinguished honor of taking the precedence of all those learned men who were engaged in the laborious undertaking of illustrating the ancient authors for the use of the Dauphin. She published four works in ten years, which gave occasion to Bayle to remark, 'That this learned lady had obtained a lofty triumph over our sex, since in the time in which most men produce but a single work, she has already published four.' This is a sentiment belonging to another age—the offspring of a truly gothic frankness. Though it may be doubted, if the same would not be said at the present day, if there existed among us a female whose merits were equally high.

All the men of letters have paid the highest compliments to the merits of Madame Dacier. Ménage dedicated to her his Latin History of Female Philosophers. Bayle often repeated her praises; Voltaire said that her translations of Homer and Terence would gain for her immortal honor; and she alone of all females had the distinguished favor of being eulogized in a public assembly of the French Academy, a favor of which she was pre-eminently worthy; for adorning her age and nation with the splendid productions of her mind.

Madame Dacier, whom nothing could restrain, nothing appease, when the glory of Homer was at stake, forgot all

the homage which had been paid to her; regarded it all as worthless, when Lamothe, in discussing the merit of the ancients and moderns, supported the pretensions of the latter. She was inflamed almost beyond reason, and defended the cause of the gods with an ardor equal to that with which Homer sung their praises. The criticisms of Lamothe, were however very excellent. Homer, said he, called Jupiter the father of the gods. But Jupiter was not the father of Saturn, nor of Cybele, nor of Juno, nor of her brothers, nor of the nymphs who cherished his infancy; nor of Mars, nor of Ceres, nor of Vesta, nor of Flora, nor of the giants, nor of men. Homer has affirmed that Jupiter drove Discord from heaven. Why, then, are the gods eternally engaged in quarrels? Madame Dacier considered all these remarks, so ingenious and so just, as utter blasphemies. She accused Lamothe of envy, of perfidy, of a malignant disposition. She said that he was cold, flat, ridiculous, impertinent, grossly ignorant and proud; that he was even destitute of common sense. She told him that Alcibiades boxed the ears of a rhetorician because he had none of the works of Homer, and what would he do to one who should read to him the Iliad of Lamothe? Lamothe made only the following reply: 'It was fortunate for me that Madame Dacier did not recollect this anecdote when I read her one of my books.' During the whole of this discussion, Lamothe always preserved his amiable temper and his good taste, and always replied with so much spirit and elegance to the aspersions of Madame Dacier—never suffering himself for a moment to lose sight of the respect and the regard due to the sex, the talents, and the noble works of his adversary—nay more, instead of retracting or weakening the praises which he had formerly bestowed upon her, he recounted them to establish and increase them, and by his high-minded justice, his calmness, and the moderation of an exalted spirit, he secured the unqualified approbation of all, and rendered the violence of Madame Dacier entirely inexcusable.

But Madame Dacier was incapable of such excitement from any other source, than an attack upon the great poets of antiquity; she was otherwise full of goodness, and remarkably modest. She was once requested by a German Lord to write in his album; she however modestly declined; but be-

ing very urgently solicited, she inscribed her name with this verse of Sophocles—

"Silence is the ornament of woman."

So passionately fond was she, as well as her husband, of every thing that had the recommendation of antiquity, that they once barely escaped being poisoned to death, by eating from an ancient dish prepared according to a recipe which they had found in Athenæus; doubtless had it been fatal, they would have derived much glory from a death so very learned and classical. When Moliere published his Amphitryon, she wrote a dissertation to prove that it was inferior to that of Plautus; but when she learned that he was writing his comedy 'Les Femmes Savantes,' she suppressed her dissertation. This anecdote can hardly be credited, since Moliere only satirised false pretension; and to ridicule Madame Dacier would be to ridicule science itself. She died on the 17th August, 1720, in the 69th year of her age. L'Abbe Fraigeur consecrated an elegy to her memory, and La Monnoye wrote her epitaph in verse. N. R.

POETRY.

THINK OF ME.

THINK of me, an exiled stranger,
Far from that green mountain home,
Where in childhood's days a ranger,
Carelessly I used to roam.

Think of me, when morn is kindling
Blushes o'er gay nature's face,
And the shades of midnight dwindling
Give to rising Phœbus place.

Think of me, when day is dipping
In the glowing western wave;
And eve's dew-drops, lightly dripping,
Thirsty earth with coolness lave.

Think of me, when giant shadows
From the lowering mountains cast,
Stalking o'er the twilight meadows,
Towards the morning embryo haste.

Think of me, when stars are peering
Down upon a sleeping world;
And night's queen is high careering,
In her car of silver whirled.

Think of me, when spring is weaving
Chaplets for her festal crown,
Countless buds of promise leaving
Wheresoe'er her wing hath flown.

Think of me, when summer's glances
Look on many a verdant scene,
And Flora with Pomona dances
In her bowers of living green.

Think of me, when autumn's treasures
Scattered lie beneath your feet,
And pensive musings tinge your pleasures,
Making pleasures doubly sweet.

Think of me, when winter hovers
O'er the realms his fetters bind—
Bidding thoughts, those lawless rovers,
Seek their native home, the mind.

Think of me, when sorrow thickens
Round the young heart's sunny dreams,
And the fainting spirit sickens,
As depart hope's cheering beams.

Think of me, when dawning gladness
Lights anew the drooping soul,

And the severing mists of sadness
O'er the troubled spirit roll.

Think of me, when pomp and fashion
Swim before the giddy sight—
Bidding each enlisted passion
Share its portion of delight.

Think of me, when lonely musing
Mournful images hath brought,
Tender pensiveness infusing
Through the placid rills of thought.

Think of me, when memory brings thee
Buried joys—forgotten tears—
Think of me, when fancy flings thee
Forward into future years.

Think of me, as one, who ever
Clung to thee in weal or wo—
One, whose wavering fondness never
Caused one tear of thine to flow.

M. B.

A FRAGMENT.

I stood upon a mountain peak—
I caught the last, the fading streak,
Which glimmer'd in the west.
'Tis an emblem of hope as it triumphs in sorrow,
'Tis the herald of peace and of joy on the morrow,
I said, for it augurs the best.

I saw the cloud of night arise—
The ling'ring night before it flies—
The bright streak fades away.

'Tis a sign of despair as it steals o'er the mind,
Its gay hopes to wither, its bright visions to blind,
When genius begins to decay.

I heard the thunder's deepest growl—
I saw the tempest's blackest scowl—
The lightning's brightest glare.
'Tis the storm of grief—'tis adversity's hour,
That brings all its terror and spends all its power,
To darken the mind with despair.

I look'd again—the storm was o'er—
The moon rose mildly from the shore,
O'er the waters of the east.
'Tis the calm of the soul—the end of all pain—
No care shall corrode—nor grief e'er again
On the heart of man ever feast.

E. H.

LINES SUGGESTED BY "VOLNEY'S RUINS."

Spirits of days departed! from your homes
Of solitude and silence, where ye veil
In lonely ruins and in silent tombs
The glory of the past, I bid ye hail.
A stranger turns him here awhile to gaze
On wasted walls, whose desolations tell
That towering here in happier days,
An empire rose, it flourished, and it fell.
He flies the converse of his fellow-men,
The merry doings of the festive hall,
For mouldering ruins; they full oft have been
The silent comforters of grief, when all
Have scorned to sooth. When slumber living things.

He loves to muse upon the fallen state;
For there is comfort in the thought it brings,
That all around like him is desolate.
In symmetry and beauty here were raised
The lordly palace and the sacred shrine,
The sun's bright fane, whose fires eternal blazed,
And statues matchless of a hero line.
Swiftly in rapture passed the winged hours—
Here pointed fame to glory's devious way,
There beckoned bliss to beauty's fairest bowers,
And pleasure smiled on all beneath her sway.
But all is desolation, and hath passed
As it had never been, from earth away.
'Tis thus, when the sun lingering yet doth cast
Upon the mountain tops his parting ray,
Then fancy soars, we yield us to her spell,
The wild creations of her witchery
Around our thrilled, enraptured senses swell,
Till earth reminds us they can never be.
Here proudly rolled the conqueror's chariot through,
A pillar rose to consecrate his fame;
Column and victor both have sunk, and who
That lives, can breathe that conqueror's name?
Where sadly stood the monumental stone,
The statue of the dead, a warrior's meed,
The crumbling marble tells a name unknown,
And time's rude wastings far and wide succeed.
The felon wolf hath fearless borne his prey
Where monarchs feasted, and his noontide lair
He makes, where regal beauty slumbering lay,
And man, e'en man, comes not to harm him there.
How much of greatness rests, thou silent grave!
Peacefully in thy bosom slumbering;
Nor worth, nor fame, nor genius' self, can save

From mute forgetfulness, when time doth fling
His shadows on the past; and man in vain
Doth vaunt him of th' eternal works of mind;
Th' historian's page, the bard's impassioned strain,
Have gone and left no single trace behind.
Spirits of days departed! to this spot,
Could ye recal, who swept the golden shell,
It would be misery that all's forgot
They loved, and sung in lofty verse so well.
Then wake them not from death's still dream,
Whom none have mourned, whom none have wept,
The world hath not a home for them,
So sweet as where they long have slept
Forgotten and unknown.
Oh! tell them not, that glory's path,
For them with laurel wreaths is decked;
Fame not a single pleasure hath
For those, who once have felt neglect,
Remembered now by none.

K.

THE LAST WISH.

Oh! that I lived in this world alone,
The last bark on life's desolate billow;
'Twere sweet to hear the last human tone,
To lay the last head on its pillow;
And dear were the hour that forever untwined
The last, lingering tie betwixt me and mankind.

Oh! that the tale of my race were told,
The last parting were not the severest;
For then not a friend would be left to grow cold,
Nor a heart to be lost when dearest;

And I should never more mourn the decay
Of joys that had lasted but one summer's day.

I've seen the garlands of friendship torn,
Her holiest pledges bartered;
I've seen Affection turned to scorn,
And Love in his own flame martyred—
I've seen two beings linked hand in hand,
And heart to heart, with so firm a band,

I had known them so true in joy and in pain,
That I thought death only could sever
Their mutual ties,—but I looked again,
And those ties were burst forever!
And thus, ever thus, hath my heart been deceived
By the hopes it embraced, and the dreams it believed.

And I thought if this world contained but one,
Such sorrows could never defile it,
That lone one's heart, with no hopes to shun,
No friend who might win and beguile it,
Need not look to a land beyond the grave
For the peace which this world never gave.

Were I that one, my home should be
Some green isle beneath a southern sky,
Where, girt by the ever-rolling sea,
And fed by Heaven,—the only eye
That could watch my deeds beneath the sun,
Were the sleepless eye of the Eternal One.

H. H.

EXHIBITION AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, MAY 1, 1827.

ORDER OF PERFORMANCE.

1. An Oration in Latin.—Edward W. Hook, *Castine, Me.*

2. An English Translation. "Speech of Ataliba on being condemned to death by the Spanish Invaders of Peru."—Charles Babbidge, *Salem.*

3. A Forensick Disputation. "Whether the separate publication of remarkable passages from authors be favorable to the advancement of Knowledge and Taste."—Henry R. Cleveland, *Lancaster;* Benjamin V. Crowninshield, *Salem.*

4. A Disquisition. "The Greeks, their Prospects, and what is due to them from Christian Nations.—Charles Ritchie, *Boston.*

5. A Dialogue in Latin. "Brutus, Cæsar, and Antonius."—Henry I. Bowditch, *Boston;* John G. Norwood, *Boston;* Edward Soley, *Boston.*

6. An Essay. "The Pleasure derived from the Fine Arts by the Artist and the common Spectator."—John T. Sargent, *Cambridge.*

7. A Dissertation. "The Effects of the French Revolution on the Progress of Political Freedom."—James L. English, *Boston.*

8. A Dialogue in Greek. "Achilles, Ulysses, and Phœnix."—Horatio D. Appleton, *Baltimore, Md.;* Arthur H. H. Bernard, *Fredericksburg, Va.;* James C. Richmond, *Providence, R. I.*

9. A Dissertation. "The Moral Character of the Age as affected by the Progress of Knowledge."—Epes S. Dixwell, *Boston.*

10. An English Translation. "Mirabeau's Address to the King on withdrawing the Foreign Troops from Paris."—George Chapman, *Boston.*

11. A Dissertation. "The Classical and Romantic Schools of Literature."—Cornelius C. Felton, *Saugus.*

12. Mathematical Exercises.—Edmund L. Cushing, *Lunenburg;* Thomas Davis, *Boston;* Alfred Lee, *Norwich, Con.;* William A. Stearns, *Bedford;* Arnold F. Welles, *Boston.*

13. An Oration in English. "The comparative Power of Distinguished Individuals in Ancient and Modern Times."—Seth Sweetser, *Newburyport.*